



A D A M G I B

ADAM GIB, THE ANTI-BURGHER

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I

SURELY not in all the seven massive volumes of the *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanæ* is there a settlement and a ministry to compare with that of the Reverend Archibald Rennie, ordained at Muckhart in the year 1734. During the fifty-two years of his incumbency—to quote from the *Fasti*¹—“he never preached in the church except the first Sunday, never had an elder, never dispensed the Communion, never had any collection for the poor, and with the exception of the dining-room where he conducted services, let the manse. He took a lease of the farm of Boghall in the parish for twenty-one years, and purchased the estate of Easter Ballilisk.”

Two years of storm preceded this settlement. The presentation in Mr. Rennie's favour was made by King George II on 20th June, 1732, but it was not till the 18th April, 1734, that it was carried out, “over the belly of the people” and of the Presbytery. On the day of moderating in the call only two persons residing in the parish and a non-resident heritor signed the call, all the rest of the parishioners being opposed to the settlement of Mr. Rennie. The Presbytery hesitated, but the Duke of Argyle and other heritors petitioned the General Assembly to enforce the presentation to Mr. Rennie on the ground that the greater portion of the landed interest in the parish was in their hands. A counter-petition came to the Assembly in favour of Mr. John Hally, probationer, a call to whom had been sustained by the Presbytery of Auchterarder. This counter-petition was signed by all the heritors save five—and these five were non-resident—and by the entire kirk-session; and it was concurred in by every one of the heads of families within the parish. The Assembly remitted the matter to its Commission, with full power “to cognosce the merits, and issue the case,”² and the Commission sent a Committee to carry the business through. “On the day appointed for the ordination, a strong body of the parishioners way-laid their intended minister and the deputation that accompanied him, on the confines of the parish, and, without offering any personal violence, conducted them back to the village of Dollar, where they kept them in safe custody till

¹ *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanæ*, revised and enlarged edition. Vol. V, p. 69.

² *History of the Congregations of the United Presbyterian Church*, by the Rev. Robert Small, D.D.; Vol. I, pp. 380-1.

the day was so far advanced that the settlement could not take place ; when they permitted them to depart. Another day was appointed for the ordination when more effectual measures were adopted to carry it into effect. A band of soldiers guarded the ministers to the place of worship, and though the people were equally determined, as on the former occasion, to make opposition, they were overawed by the presence of the military from proceeding to acts of violence. The church-door having been previously well secured, the ministers and those that accompanied them were obliged to make their entry by one of the windows ; and there, in the presence of empty pews, did they go through the forms of an ordination—not a single individual connected with the parish being present except two heritors and an Episcopalian non-resident. To finish the solemnities of the day, several of the parishioners were taken prisoners, and were ordered to be confined in Castle Campbell, an ancient seat of the Argyle family, in ruins ; but after a short while they were permitted to return to their homes on giving bail.”¹ On that 18th April, 1734, began a ministry—to call it that—which existed till Mr. Rennie’s death on 13th March, 1786 ; but practically every parishioner of Muckhart parish stood aloof², even though it was that same Mr. Rennie who literally held a candle to let Ebenezer Erskine see to read his defence to the August Commission of 1733.

Even a local commotion at times throws up a leader, and this outburst brought Adam Gib to the front. Born on 7th April, 1714, he was a youth of twenty and a leader of the opposition when Mr. Rennie was planted on Muckhart parish.

II

Adam Gib’s father was John Gib, laird of Castletown, which was, like Dairsie and Monimail, a fortified manor-house of Bishop Lamberton of St. Andrews, the friend and supporter of Robert the Brus. Castletown was nearer Dollar than Muckhart, and there remains of it only a turret and a gateway built into what is now called Cowden Castle,³ and thereby hangs a tale.

According to the headstone in Muckhart kirk-yard, a John Gib was described as of Touchie in Orwell parish and of Castletown in Muckhart.

¹ *History of the Secession Church*, by the Rev. John McKerrow. 1839 ed., Vol. I, pp. 155-6.

² Small, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 380-1.

³ Cowden Castle got its name from another property beside the River Devon, according to Miss Christie, the present proprietrix, who has been most interested and kind and helpful.

Castletown in 1728 came to his son, another John Gib, and he died in 1748. The story is that this latter had executed a deed wherein he put the Castletown estate past his oldest son and left it to a younger son, Adam. The eldest son's behaviour had angered his father and hence his action ; but when the father died and the deed was read, Adam saw the distress of his eldest brother, and asked him if he were minded to amend his ways, were the estate restored to him. He promised : whereupon Adam put the deed into the fire. This story entranced the late Principal Fairbairn of Mansfield College, Oxford, and many another ; but I have found it difficult to get either proof or disproof of the action. It is objected—that Adam was the ninth son ; that this way of annulling a legal deed savours more of the novelist than of usage or of reality ; and that it was taking a grave moral risk to do all this on a mere promise of amendment. On the other hand, the title-deeds—I have seen them¹—show no break and no trace of any such transaction (as indeed they hardly could, in the very nature of the case) ; nor is there anything forthcoming in the *Retours* for Perthshire even to connect a Gib with Castletown, or in the *Commissariat* of Dunblane.² In the former are mentioned Gibs in the parishes of Fossoway and Blackford and Auchterarder, but not in Muckhart. Such blanks do not disprove the story which is one hardly likely to be invented, and is entirely in keeping with Adam Gib's impetuous and generous disposition.

In 1730 Adam Gib was a student at Edinburgh University, and his studies were superintended by an uncle, Mr. Gib, a noted surgeon there ; and medicine seemed the career before him. The famous Professor Colin McLaurin—he entered Glasgow University in his 11th year, took the degree of M.A. at the age of 15, and was appointed Professor of Mathematics at Aberdeen University when 19 years of age, and had been transferred to Edinburgh University in 1725 (he was a favourite pupil of Sir Isaac Newton, who eked out the students' fees for his support, and he was the glory of Edinburgh University)—this professor captured the mind of Adam Gib and gave him a mathematical bent which he never lost, for better or for worse. If McLaurin was " Jupiter " Carlyle's favourite professor, Adam Gib was a favourite pupil, and a mathematical career might well have been his ; but one day as he was passing down the West Bow absorbed in some mathematical problem he was caught in a crowd, and was held up in the Grassmarket opposite the gallows whereon a man

¹ *Castletown Titles* : Miss Christie suggested they be inspected in the hands of Messrs. W. & F. Haldane, W.S., Edinburgh, and by their courtesy this was done.

² *Retours—Perthshire*, No. 288 (October 3, 1620) and 1018 (December 9, 1695). *Register of Testaments*, 1539-1860—*Commissariat Record*, Dunblane (Scottish Record Society).

was being hanged. This set him a-thinking hard of other things than mathematics. His inward struggles led him to draw up a covenant with his God and to sign it with his blood ; but he still was quite short of Calvary until Luther on *Galatians* brought him light and to the Saviour's Cross. Like Robert Rainy of a later day, he gave up thought of medicine as his life-work and looked toward the ministry of the Word. His father was indignant at this change of career, but in time came to approve his son's decision.

III

Adam Gib studied Theology in the Divinity Hall of the Seceders, whose professor was the Rev. William Wilson of Perth. The *Medulla* of the Dutchman Marckius was the text-book prelected upon, and this doubtless affected at least the form of his thinking, not for the better, as Principal Denney doubtless would have said. He also mastered Hebrew—at least he was entranced by the accentual system of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, and held that the Hebrew “points” were given by inspiration of God ! All this recalls Thomas Boston, who thought so little of his *Fourfold State*, but thought all the world of his *Tractatus Stigmologicus Hebraeo-Biblicus*, a treatise on Hebrew punctuation, which was at last printed in Holland.¹ Adam Gib went farther. He elaborated a method of punctuating his own language, in the interest of greater clearness, increasing the number of points from four to nine as compared with the fifteen of Hebrew. One must say that his native force and clarity hardly needed such aid, while his incessant italicising and super-abundance of capital letters are unhelpful. He says : “ I make no account of reflections (such as I have met with) about my way of pointing, from its being uncommon. My concern is that it may be what I reckon just and accurate; properly distinguishing the co-ordinate and subordinate parts of matter in sentences, of some resemblance, as our language can admit, to the divine accuracy of punctuation (by what are called accents) in the Hebrew Bible.”²

When a Divinity student he had to cleave his way through one thicket of doubt and questioning after another, which may explain the assurance with which in after days he thought and spake and acted. He found great help in the counsels of his professor, of whom “ he could never speak but in terms of enthusiastic admiration.”³

¹ Published at Amsterdam in 1738. Thomas Boston died 1732.

² *The Present Truth : A Display of the Secession Testimony* : Vol. I, p. VI, note. Also Vol. II, p. 426. *Sacred Contemplations*, preface.

³ *Memoirs of the Rev. William Wilson*, by Ferrier. 1830. p. 370.

There was another side to his preparation, the ecclesiastical. He himself tells¹ in a foot-note of autobiography (which by the way illustrates his system of punctuation): "Having entered to the University of Edinburgh in Winter, 1730; he was present, during the next three years—in most, if not all the meetings of the General Assemblies and their Commissions: And, from what he observed at some of these meetings, he came to a resolution in Winter 1732—to acknowledge no connection with the Judicatories of the established Church, according to the state which he saw them in; while then in no connection or acquaintance with any of the Ministers who afterwards composed the Associate Presbytery. When the Synod of *Perth* and *Stirling*, in *October* 1735, enrolled the intruder into the parish of Muckhart (to which he belonged); he gave in to that Synod, a Declaration of Secession from them and all the other Judicatories of the established Church, some Commissioners from that parish doing the like: Of which Declarations they got extracts from the Synod-clerk; the same having been admitted into the Records, for the purpose of having Answers made to them which might prevent a following of that example, though any Answers, as is supposed, have never yet been agreed upon. In *December* following, the Extracts of these Declarations of *Secession* were laid before the *Associate Presbytery*—with Declarations of *Accession* to them; which were then received, the first ever received by them. And he was present in most of the meetings of that Presbytery afterwards; till, having been licensed by them on the 5th of *March*, 1740, he was admitted to a seat in it, as ordained at *Edinburgh*, on the 2nd of April, 1741: Since which time, he has been kept in the way of exerting his capacity for the service of the Secession Cause."

IV

His preparation in Theology being completed, he was taken on trials by the Presbytery, and after close sifting by the members of that Court he was solemnly licensed to preach the Gospel on 5th March, 1740, in the West kirk of Stirling. The probationer had not long to wait in those days when preachers were scarce. He was called to Stichel and to Edinburgh. The Presbytery chose Edinburgh for him, and he was duly ordained over that congregation on 2nd April, 1741, as their first minister.

Although the Secession began in 1733, it was not until 1740 that the door was finally shut, and Edinburgh had not hitherto played a prominent part in it. The congregation there worshipped sometimes among the whins

¹ *The Present Truth: A Display of the Secession Testimony*: Vol. I, p. vi, note.

of the Braid's Craigs and usually in the Gardeners' Hall, near the Gardener Crescent of the present day.

We might expect protest and fulmination on the occasion from the Church that these Seceders had left ; but at Adam Gib's ordination a blast from another quarter rang in his ears. In Edinburgh University Library is a pamphlet I have not found mentioned elsewhere, whose title usefully condenses its contents : " A Protestation and Declaration against the Calling, Ordination, and Settlement of Mr. Adam Gib, pretended preacher, and now installed Incumbent in the Bounds near Edinburgh. And a copy given to Mr. Alexander (*sic*) Wilson of Perth, the Ordainer of the said Mr. Gib, on March 28th, 1741. By the Friends and Lovers of Truth and Righteousness, and for Liberty and Property, active and passive, etc., Jer. xxiii, 21—I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran. Jude 11—Woe unto them : for they have gone the way of Cain and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for a reward. LONDON : Printed for T. Telltruth, at the sign of the Burning Bush, by Plaindealing Alley, in Pilgrim Street, MDCCXLI."

This broadside was fired not only into Adam Gib and the Seceders who ordained him, but also into the established Church and into the State itself, all because they had not set the Covenants in the fore-front of their being and doing. It was plainly a Cameronian outburst denouncing the ordinand in twelve particulars and assailing him on the ground of his behaviour, his self-conceit especially in debate, his gross lying, his unworthiness to be a Preacher, his exalting of reason, his corrupt and erroneous views regarding a Scriptural Christian Magistracy, his abuse of Scripture to support and defend a malignant throne, his strolling through the land with false glosses, and his being a member of that confederacy and unlawful combination of the Seceding Associates, in actual confederacy with the sacrilegious throne of Britain, and they in strict confederacy with Anti-Christ and his limbs, and he with Satan and Hell in a firm alliance, they also immersed in, and guilty of all the Defections, Abominations, and Apostacies of this Erastian Church, and malignant State since the year 1660 to this day. " Like Samson's foxes, although their heads be opposite, anent some circumstantial points, yet there is a conjunction of tails at the Centre of the bloody Throne, which robs Christ of his supremacy, and the Church of her privileges." The final counts against Adam Gib are : that he had been called by a corrupt and unqualified people ; that he will not take oaths and Covenants ; and that he was installed by those not ministers. Such a round of the guns was at least a strong advertisement. " The ordination took place in the open air, toward the close of an unusually severe winter. An aged matron, who witnessed the scene, often afterwards spake of it with delight.

“ Ah, I was so glad when the ministers laid their hands upon his bonnie head and screened it from the falling snow.”¹

The young minister had to face a strenuous task. The large and shapeless congregation had to be knit together from being for the most part a collection of “ Praying Societies ” ; a place of worship had to be built ; and then the demand for prolonged and manifold pulpit services, on the Lord’s Day and on week-days, at home and all over the land, was severe. True, there was little of the abounding organisations inside and outside the congregation that eat into the modern minister’s time and vigour, but there were the Catechizings or “ Examins,” and they could be formidable. The young minister faced it all with a stout heart. A meeting-house was built at “ Bristow near Edinburgh,” much on the site of the present Bristo Church, now a University Hall. A four-storey tenement replaced some thatched houses, and the first flat provided a house for the minister which became historic, including as it did a hall for kirk-session and other meetings. Mr. James Thin has described this kirk-building,² with ground alongside for Tent-preachings at Sacrament occasions, and a portion as a garden for the minister’s use ; and we are told that in 1744 there were 1279 members on the roll, while Adam Gib at a later time (1765) claims that he has about 2000 hearers as witnesses every Sabbath day.³

V

The ministerial career of Adam Gib has controversies as its milestones, and the first after his ordination was concerned with the Reverend George Whitefield’s preachings in Scotland. This conflict is for many the only thing they know about Adam Gib. George Whitefield and John Wesley made great preaching journeys in Scotland, but not together. With other things to distinguish these two priests of the Church of England, Wesley’s Arminian teaching was not so acceptable in Scotland as was Whitefield’s Calvinism. Wesley, however, had a genius for organising results, and up and down all lands where he came he formed companies of adherents under full and exacting regulations. Whitefield did nothing of the sort, and so his work melted into other streams. He and the Secession Fathers thought at first that they had much in common beyond their evangelising passion ; but it soon was found that Whitefield, an ordained priest of the Church of England, if he sat somewhat lightly

¹ *Memorials of Bristo Church* (by James Thin). p. 25.

² *Ibid.* pp. 25-32.

³ *Scots Magazine*, Vol. XXVII, June 14, 1765.

to his own Church Communion, was not any the more inclined to identify himself with Presbytery or anything else. The Seceders were evangelists first, but they certainly were churchmen next, and they could not think of an evangelising that should not bind the converts together into a church. Their fathers had suffered too deeply at the hands of "Black Prelacy" and had drunk too deeply at the well of Samuel Rutherford and John Brown of Wamphray to welcome any one who came among them evangelising unless he were prepared in effect to abjure Prelacy and at least to search for a Scriptural substitute, and pitch his tent there. Whitefield and these Fathers corresponded; they met; they were much taken with each other; George Whitefield's message was thought to be of the true and rich savour; but farther they could not get, and before long went each their own ways—to the great loss of both and to the delight of some who were no friends of the Secession.

Adam Gib threw himself into this controversy with the ardour of youth and the keenness and mercilessness of a debater. In June, 1742, hardly more than a year after his ordination, he preached a sermon "in the New Church at Bristow," and printed it with an introduction and a supplement confirmatory. In these days a title-page was an epitome of a book; so here we have this: "A Warning against Countenancing the Ministrations of Mr. George Whitefield, published in the New Church at Bristow, upon Sabbath, June 6th, 1742, Together with an Appendix upon the same subject, Wherein are shewn, that Mr. Whitefield is no Minister of Jesus Christ; that his Call and Coming to Scotland are scandalous; that his Practice is disorderly, and fertile of disorder; that his whole doctrine is, and his Success must be, diabolical; so that people ought to avoid him, from Duty to God, to the Church, to themselves, to Fellowmen, to Posterity, and to him. By Adam Gib, Minister of the Gospel at EDINBURGH. In the last days perilous Times shall come. 2 Tim. III, 1. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets. Matt. XXIV, 24. THE THIRD EDITION. EDINBURGH. Printed for, and sold by David Duncan at his House in the Grass-Market, opposite to the Corn-Market, South-side of the Street, the second Door up the Timber-ravel'd Fore-Stair. MDCCXLII."

As to this incisive and appalling tractlet, it must be said that it seems certain that the author in after days deeply regretted the tone and temper in which he had dealt with the matter. Testimony as to this change of mind comes from several sides, and some too close to the author to be suspect. E.g. In Fraser's *Life of Ralph Erskine*, a surviving nephew of the Rev. Adam Gib tells that "when his uncle, in advanced life, made him a present of his 'Sacred Contemplations' he alluded to the pamphlet against Mr. Whitefield, he had given him many years before, adding that

he had never read it. Mr. Gib replied, that he wished no copies of that pamphlet were on the face of the earth, and that if he knew by what means he could recall them, he would collect every copy and burn them ; for ‘ my blood,’ said he, ‘ at that time, was too hot, and I was unable to write with becoming temper.”¹

On the merits of the controversy, apart from the atrocious temper and method of conducting it, it seems difficult to see how men grounded in the theology of the Second Reformation could co-operate with one so far removed from their fundamental positions in what follows from proclaiming the Evangel. Perhaps the matter stands out more clearly if, instead of listening to Adam Gib’s fervent and intemperate words, we hearken to the concise, measured, unimpassioned statement of the Seceders’ difficulties about George Whitefield and their objections to his whole standing as set forth by John Brown of Haddington. He says : “ From Mr. George Whitefield’s own missives to Mr. Erskine, and other reports, sundry, if not all of the Seceding ministers, conceived no small regard for him. But finding, by converse with him, that he decried every form of Church government *as a mere human device*, finding, in his sermons and journals, a number of hints which they deemed not agreeable to the Word of God ; and exceedingly offended with his printed account of God’s dealing with his soul wherein they thought he had shewn a strange fondness to run the parallel between himself and Jesus Christ, had represented Popish, and some other bad books, as the darling directors of his spiritual exercise ; had founded his call to the ministry upon early stirring of his affections, idle tales, dreams, and impressions ; had represented abstinence from flesh in Lent, living on coarse food, wearing of woollen gloves, a patched gown, and dirty shoes, *as great promoters of the spiritual life* ; and averred that in his unconverted state he had endeavoured to do all to the glory of God ; was built up in the knowledge and fear of God ; received abundant grace, in receiving the Lord’s Supper ; and increased in favour with God and man ; had represented his conversion as if it began in an uncommon drought and clamminess in his throat, and which, by means of his casting himself down on the bed, and, in imitation of Jesus Christ, crying out, *I thirst*, was recovered, and succeeded with a ravishing joy, and rejoicing in God his Saviour, by which his conversion was finished ; and pretended to have been guided by the Spirit, and by watching and reading the Scripture on his knees, *in the minutest circumstance*, as plainly as the Jews, by consulting the Urim and Thummim, etc. : These, and the like things, together with his *letter* and extract, wherein he insisted for joining Christians of all denominations, Papists or Protestants, Quakers, Arians, Arminians, etc.,

¹ *Life of Ralph Erskine*, by Donald Fraser ; p. 351.

if not also Jews and Heathens, into one religious society, without minding their different sentiments : provoked the Seceders to turn their regard into dislike and warm opposition.”¹

The conclusion of this controversy seems to be that, if we remember the theology which the Secession fathers cherished, even as modified by “Marrow” teaching, though we may thoroughly condemn the temper in which some of them made and stated their points, it is not easy to see how they could have worked in harness with a George Whitefield. Some in our day refused to share in Mr. D. L. Moody’s preaching mission ; but if Mr. Moody had been an ordained Anglican priest, there would have been still more aloofness in not a few quarters.

VI

Quite different is the next controversy in which we find Adam Gib a-warring. His Edinburgh congregation are again worshipping away from the city, though they now have a meeting-house at Bristo just outside—this time it is at Dreghorn, to the South-West. It is the year 1745, and Prince Charlie is at Holyrood, master of Edinburgh save only of the Castle. Just as on the threshold of the next century the Rev. Dr. Porteous accused the Seceders of lack of principle and of patriotism—to be answered and crushed by the Rev. Dr. James Peddie in a masterpiece of rejoinder—so in 1745 there was talk that the Seceders were in secret league with the Pretender. To disprove this, Adam Gib, instead of continuing to conduct service in his own church, though all the Edinburgh ministers were urged to do so by the Prince, gathered his people for five Sabbaths at Dreghorn, a place so far from being remote from the enemy as to be one of their principal stations.

In the General Assembly of 1765 what was called the Schism Overture made a great stir. It was aimed, as Adam Gib says, not at Papists or Episcopalians, non-jurors as well as jurors, but at the Seceders, citing the number of their meeting-houses erected and persons resorting to them. It was cast up to them that their loyalty to the present government was suspect in that “none of them took up arms against the Pretender in the year 1745.” Adam Gib took up the challenge,² and after reciting outstanding facts to rebut the charge, he goes on : “While the rebels were in possession of the city, I preached at Dreghorn, in the open fields, five Sabbath days ; expressly preaching up an abhorrence of the rebellion then on foot, and an hope of its speedy overthrow. On each

¹ *An Historical Account of the Rise and Progress of the Secession*, by Mr. John Brown, late Minister of the Gospel at Haddington, 1819 ; p. 63.

² *Scots Magazine*, Vol. XXVII, June 14, 1765.

of these days I made express mention of our Sovereign King George in public prayer ; praying for the safety of his reign, the support of his government, and blessing on his family, and the preservation of the Protestant succession of that family—at the same time praying for the suppression of the rebellion, expressly under the characters of an unnatural and anti-Christian rebellion, headed by a Popish pretender ; and while I was doing so I ordinarily had a party from the rebel guard at Collington, who understood English, standing before me on the outside of the multitude—particularly upon one of these Sabbaths I read an Act of the Associate Synod for a solemn fast, to be observed on the Tuesday following ; which Act was mainly levelled against the rebellion, with calls to pray for the King, and against that rebellion, in such express terms, and under such express characters, as I have mentioned. During the reading of which Act, I had a party of the rebels standing before me, who shewed great displeasure, and threatened in the hearing of some of the people, to prevent the observing of that fast. But though they then attended, with signs of great displeasure, they were restrained from using any violence ; yet, about that time, as I was passing on the road near Collington, one of them who seemed to be in some command, fired at me ; but, for anything that appeared, it might be only with a design to fright me. When the rebels were returning from England, and there was some fear of their coming this way, the Seceders here readily obeyed a call from the sheriff to take part again in the defence of the city ; and they kept their post in the College-yard, learning their exercise, all at their own expense, till a sufficient body of the military arrived. A Company of the Seceders from Glasgow readily obeyed a call to attend the army to Falkirk, where some of them lost their lives—and I was searched for by the rebels in Falkirk on the evening after the battle there, upon account of my activity, about two or three hours before the battle, in getting a person apprehended who has just come from the rebel-camp—and carried to General Hawley, to be examined for intelligence : as the said person was found in prison by the rebels, upon their taking possession of Falkirk. In a word, it must be still remembered by many persons of distinction yet alive—what special confidence was then put in the Seceders ; and which was particularly documented by some letters to me, yet in my custody. . . . I have about 2000 witnesses for this, on my part, every Sabbath day ; and all my brethren have the like testimony in their congregations.”¹

These Seceders held that Prince Charlie with all his romance stood really for Popery, that baleful shadow behind the contendings in Scotland

¹ For further evidence see Fraser's *Life and Diary of the Rev. Ebenezer Erskine*, pp. 439-446.

from the First Reformation onwards. Moncrieff of Culfargie's son was interned at Doune Castle as a hostage to ensure his father's quiescence, but in vain. Ebenezer Erskine with all his years turned out in uniform at Stirling, as did Henry Erskine at Falkirk. And any Seceder aiding, abetting, and comforting the enemy had to answer for it before their kirk-sessions.

VII

The next major controversy in which Adam Gib was involved arose out of civic or political action taken against Romanism or its advance-guard Jacobitism. In certain Burghs of Scotland every one elected a Burgess was required to swear a prescribed oath, which had been drawn up so as to exclude Papists and disaffected Prelatists. With some variations in places, the religious clause in this oath ran thus (in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Perth): "HERE I PROTEST BEFORE GOD AND YOUR LORDSHIPS THAT I PROFESS AND ALLOW WITH MY HEART THE TRUE RELIGION PRESENTLY PROFESSED WITHIN THIS REALM AND AUTHORIZED BY THE LAWS THEREOF: I SHALL ABIDE THEREAT AND DEFEND THE SAME TO MY LIFE'S END: RENOUNCING THE ROMAN RELIGION CALLED PAPISTRY."

The Rev. Alexander Moncrieff of Abernethy ("Culfargie") first raised the question as to a Seceder swearing any such oath, and Adam Gib, though so much younger, backed him with all vigour. The Associate Presbytery had constituted itself a Synod comprising three Presbyteries, and this Synod held its first meeting on the first Tuesday of March, 1745. Before that year was done the Synod had met four times, and in 1746 it met three times; and though Prince Charlie was rampant in the land the chief business in them all concerned the Burgess Oath and the way it affected Seceders. There were other oaths in Scotland that raised similar scruples, such as the Constables' oath, the Chapmans' oath, and the Masons' oath, while in England and Ireland men were perplexed about oaths imposed upon constables and church-wardens, and those in Bishops' Courts where wills were registered.

The record of the discussions in Synod on the Burgess Oath is filled full of ingenuities, of over-subtle distinctions, of confused and confusing proposals put before the Synod, and procedure bristling with protests, with accommodating motions, with evasions of the issue, and with dour determined insistence upon particular lines of action. It wrings the heart to read how these worthy men fought against one another with heat and bitterness and rigour and lack of proportion, all on the best view of it springing out of the driving of over-refining conscience. Does not

the great Adam Smith say : " The truest patriot is the man who has the keenest conscience of the nation's sins " ? One thing stands out in the present controversy : all the Seceders condemned the religious clause in the Burgess Oath and warned every one of their following against taking it. But some argued keenly that to take such an oath was constructively a subversion of the Testimony of the Seceders against current evils, and of the truth brought to the front in the First and Second Reformations, and therefore was to be held as treachery to Jesus Christ as King and as Mediator, and to call for and warrant exclusion from the Church. (Constructive heresy can be as dangerous as constructive treason.) The other side also condemned the oath, but it did not go so far as to hold that those taking it were to be cast out of the Church. The procedure ebbed and flowed : protests, dissents, and answers were accepted very readily : questions settled were re-opened : sometimes members abstained or were debarred from voting as being parties to the case at that particular point : so there was much confusion. But on 9th April, 1746, this motion was proposed—" The Synod find, That a swearing the religious clause of some Burgess-oaths (the words have been quoted above) by any under their inspection, as the said clause comes necessarily in this period to be used and applied, does not agree unto the present state and circumstances of the testimony for religion and reformation which this Synod, with those under their inspection, are maintaining, particularly, that it does not agree unto nor consist with our entering into the bond for renewing our Solemn Covenants : and that, therefore, those of the Secession cannot further, with safety of conscience and without sin, swear any Burgess oath with the said Religious Clause ; while matters, with reference to the profession and settlement of religion, continue in such circumstances as at present. Moreover, the Synod find, That burgesses of the Secession, who are already concerned in such oaths, should be required, in order to their admission into the bond for renewing our Solemn Covenants, to attend conference with their respective Sessions ; for signifying satisfaction with the present judgment of the Synod ; and a sense of the mistake they have hitherto, through inadvertency, been under, concerning such Burgess-oaths."¹ The counter-motion was for delay till next meeting, but by 13 to 9 the first motion was carried, protests against this decision being lodged.

Next year the procedure was largely an attempt to upset or evade this decision, or to avert the disruption that seemed impending ; but at length, on the evening of the 9th April, 1747, the question was put,²

¹ *Adam Gib : Display.* Vol. II, 20-1.

² *McKerrow : History.* Vol. I, pp. 280-1.

and it carried, That the decision of the Synod in April, 1746, shall not be made a term of ministerial and Christian communion, "Aye and until the making of the same to be so shall be referred by way of overture unto Presbyteries and Kirk-Sessions in order to their giving their judgment thereanent," etc. Of 55 members present only 20 voted (9 ministers and 11 elders) on this question, and all in favour of the decision that was carried: 23 (13 ministers and 10 elders) having previously protested against putting the question, did not consider themselves at liberty to give any vote. And there were some who did not vote at all. "In a chaos of absurdity and confusion," as Adam Gib says, protest was tabled against this decision, and the claim was made that the protesters and others adhering are the Associate Synod and take up and exercise its authority and power; and its next meeting called to be "in Mr. Gib's house" the next morning at ten of the clock forenoon.¹

Then began the series of summonses, suspensions, libels, contumacies, depositions, all most deliberately and most formally carried through, against those of the other party (called for convenience the Burghers) by those who took the sterner view of the Burgess-oath and its implications and were called the Anti-Burghers. It culminated in the Greater Excommunication, and to that the Erskine brothers, and Fisher and their ministerial following were subjected. In every case certain texts from the New Testament were solemnly adduced and recited, such as—Matthew xviii, 17—"If he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican"; I Cor. v, 3-5—"For I verily . . . have judged already . . . concerning him that hath so done this deed, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus"; I Tim. i, 20—"Hymenaeus and Alexander whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme"; Galatians v, 12—"I would they were even cut off that trouble you." We of a slighter build in these days are given to pass by such passages with a shudder, not having "bowels of brass" like Origen; but the Anti-Burghers flinched not from asserting their relevancy to the persons charged and shrank not from applying them to the full.

This awesome course of action split the Secession in twain and might have dug its grave; but while the two sections remained apart for seventy three years, when they did re-unite it was with a fervour found in no other Church Union in Scotland. But "The Breach" of 1747, as it was called, ran through the land and crossed the seas. Congregations and Kirk-Sessions were rent asunder; disputes about property were rife and kept the law-courts busy; comrades and friends were separated from each

¹ *Display*: Vol. II, pp. 50-55.

other ; families were divided—one of Ralph Erskine's sons took the Anti-Burgher side, and Ebenezer Erskine's daughter, who was wife of the Rev. James Scot of Gateshaw, was courteously helped by her Anti-Burgher husband to mount her pony to take her to the Burgher kirk at Jedburgh. It was in many a case simply cruel in its outcome, and bitterness abounded. Yet, as wrote Dr. Gavin Struthers, himself no Seceder, but a minister of and the historian of the Relief Church, and standing apart from and very consciously above the quarrel : " Out of evil, however, God brought forth good. The storm of human passion was made the means of greatly benefiting the interests of religion, and of diffusing dissenting principles over the country. . . . With all their bickerings about lesser matters, magnified unfortunately into an undue importance, the Seceders continued to preach the great truths of the gospel with much acceptance, were faithful and laborious ministers, and were exceedingly careful to preserve unimpaired the elective franchise of the people. In 1761, they were two large and powerful bodies, with missionaries in America and Ireland, and were gradually spreading themselves into England. They were taking deep root and filling the land."¹

At " The Breach " of 1747 there were 56 members of Synod present, of whom 29 were ministers and 27 were elders. These figures were somewhat questioned, but that is how Rev. John McKerrow reckons them;² yet a count made in 1761 by the Established Church gave the Burghers 42 settled congregations and 17 vacancies, and the Anti-Burghers about 97 congregations and 16 vacancies, all as a base whereon to set the " Schism Overture " of 1765. In 1820 the re-united Church had 262 ministers on its roll.

Yet for this sundering and over-pressing of argument, for the forcing on of the Breach and the making of it irreparable when it came, it is Adam Gib, perhaps even more than Alexander Moncrieff,⁴ who must bear the chief burden of the blame. It is much too strong to call him " the curse of the Secession," but he certainly was a leader, if not THE leader, in driving things to an extremity.

He himself soon felt the grip of it in his own congregation of Bristo. They had built their church and manse. In a loose way the titles were taken in name of two individuals who gave the congregation a back-letter that they held the ground and properties only as trustees for the congregation. But after " The Breach," when Adam Gib, with the majority of the congregation behind him—nine-tenths it is said—required of these Trustees (they had taken the Burgher side) that they denude

¹ *History of the Rise, Progress, and Principles of the Relief Church*, by Gavin Struthers, D.D. ; p. 171.

² McKerrow : *History*. Vol. I, p. 284, note.

themselves, they refused, and held the property in spite of him ; and after copious litigation the Court of Session decided against him.¹ So in 1753, with 8 elders out of 17 or 19, and with nine-tenths of the membership, he left the church that had been built so recently at a cost of over £1000. Before that year was out, in four months, they had built another church in the Cross-Causey and behind the houses on the north side thereof. There was no Nicolson Street then, but when the church had to be re-built, it was on the old site, but with some ground added to bring it to the front in the Nicolson Street which had been formed ; and the Nicolson Street Church of to-day represents the Church of Adam Gib and the Anti-Burghers. He had left the Bristo manse, but he lived—Mr. C. B. Boog Watson has given me many details about these properties as at that time—across Nicolson Street from the Church, and the connexion is preserved to this day in the “ Gibb’s Entry ” that all men may see as they pass along.

It so happens that we know what it cost to build the Church at Bristo ; it is not known now what the new church at the Cross-Causey cost. But one thing impresses me greatly—the complete absence of money-matters in Presbytery and Synod minutes of that time, beyond a Fund for Ministers’ widows, of which by the way Adam Gib was Treasurer for many a year.

VIII

We now take some note of the more ecclesiastical side of Adam Gib’s activities. In 1743 the Rev. Thomas Nairn of Abbotshall left the Secession having taken up a position that seemed to overthrow Civil Magistracy, and for a time he joined the Cameronians. This led to much discussion as to the Civil Magistrate’s warrant and sphere ; and Adam Gib laid down guiding principles that perhaps were hard to reconcile with what the Seceders at first held as to the State’s relation to the Church, but that bore fruit later on in the Anti-Burgher Kirk before the Re-union of 1820, and provided an armoury for the Voluntary Controversy that soon followed. Nairn seceded and was cast out.

A testing instance arose in 1759 when “ Culfargie ” proposed the sending of an Address to the King asking redress of the Seceders’ grievances concerning the present state of religion in these lands ; and a disappointed man was he when the Synod would not take this course. Again, in 1761, it was proposed to send a dutiful and loyal Address to George III on his accession to the throne ; but the Synod, while setting forth at great length their loyalty to the present dynasty as being Protestant and

¹ *Memorials of Bristo Church* (by James Thin) ; p. 48.

standing for freedom, found they could not well present an Address seeing that in the eyes of the law the Seceders had no standing, no existence, as the Bristo and other litigations evinced—rather a pawky way out !

But the doings of Presbytery and of Synod except in one particular do not explain the unexampled supremacy that Adam Gib had come to have in the Anti-Burgher Kirk. In Presbytery and Synod he fought interminable battles, e.g. in the case (so little creditable to him) of the Leith elders. Dr. Small¹ says that no man in any of the three Synods, Anti-burgher, Burgher, or Relief, ever wielded half the power that he did. His *Display of the Secession Testimony* gives the contendings of these times at first hand, and when matters of dispute arose worthy of his powers he came down on them like a battle-axe, clear, weighty, and decisive. He himself owns that at least once he pled his case with tears. But he was nick-named "Pope Gib," and he bare the sceptre over the most prickly-minded body of Churchmen that Scotland has ever seen, whose decisions were so often hampered by protests, and who were ever a kittle team to lead. But Adam Gib rose to this strange pre-eminence, though at times his methods were novel. Now and then for a spell he would sit in Court without opening his mouth. One pamphleteer of the period said he "happened to take a dumb fit" and would not open his mouth ! But there was worse. Twice over he absented himself altogether from the meetings of the Anti-Burgher Synod. On April 30th, 1771, the Synod sent some brethren to learn the reason of his absence, and they brought back a lengthy paper, hinting at grievances held though unexpressed, yet agreeing to return if that paper were engrossed. The Synod was far from being satisfied, but in all the circumstances agreed to his return and to the engrossing of his paper. Again in August, 1780, Adam Gib was sent for by the Synod to give his reasons for absenting himself from the Synod since May, 1776. He gave several grievances both of a personal and public nature. The Synod reaffirmed its adherence to the course taken by the Secession, agreed to reconsider a motion by Mr. Gib which they had rejected in 1776, and charged members to abstain from introducing matters relating to the present political state of public affairs which may be stumbling or straitening to any of the members : that on these terms Mr. Gib be required to return to his seat, "all personal grievances to be buried under a general recommendation by the Synod," and all party spirit or mutual provocation to be excluded. Mr. Gib submitted to the requisition made by the Synod and took his seat.

As late as 1786—Adam Gib died in 1788—we find him saying in a Declaration to the Synod : "I consider myself as now lying buried in the minutes of this Synod, under a grave-stone of mis-representation and

¹ Small's *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 427.

reproach and falsehood, with such an embargo from freedom of speech in behalf of the Public Cause which I have long professed as I cannot in my own view submit unto consistently with my claiming of any freedom of speech at all in this Synod." But the Synod recorded that "they apprehend Mr. Gib has misunderstood them . . . and that they cannot approve of him or any other member continuing in a state of inactivity in the business of this Synod." If these transactions seem rather out of step with Presbyterian theory and usage, they at least testify to the amazing place and power Adam Gib had given him in the Anti-Burgher Synod.

It has been said of Adam Gib that his brethren couldn't get on *with* him, and still less could they get on *without* him ; and with some warrant. But one is glad to find that in 1782 Adam Gib strove for liberty when Mr. Smyton of Kilmaurs wished the Synod to enjoin all ministers to take into their hand the bread and the cup at the Lord's Supper before leading in prayer. Smyton and his adherents were called "Lifters," and they sought to shew that this question ran down to the very foundations of the faith.

IX

These are somewhat arid regions, even though Adam Gib's guidance of us through them in his *Display* does not lack liveliness and drive. But there is the other side of his activity as a Churchman, viz., in asserting and defending the Evangelical faith. All the worthier separations in Scots Presbyterianism have sprung from a deep concern for the purity and freedom of the Gospel of God's grace in Jesus Christ. This anxiety underlay the Secession from the Established Church, and it was at work in "The Breach" of 1747. Adam Gib ranged himself with men who found themselves striving for "the defence and confirmation of the Gospel." The "Marrow-men" had opened a new chapter in the story of the Evangelical faith in Scotland, and people who were so largely starved in their spirits flocked in thousands to hear the message as these men proclaimed it, at Public Fasts and on sacramental occasions. Boston and Hog and others had lit the torch ; the Erskines and Fisher handed it on ; Adam Gib carried it still farther and shook it vigorously till it shone far and near.

Over against the Arminianism and Arianism that lurked under a cloud of words in the lectures and writings of some Divinity professors, over against the mere leaving out of saving truths, and instead, as David Hume charged "Jupiter Carlyle," giving from the pulpit one of the Academics of Cicero ; over against an orthodoxy in statement of Christian things that yet lacked the glow and warmth of personal experience ; and

over against that Antinomianism that has been apt to dog Gospel teaching from the days of the Apostles onwards—over against all these the Seceders set up a banner in their “Act concerning the Doctrine of Grace” which is a notable land-mark in the record of Evangelical teaching in this land.¹ In this Act false and defective teaching was exposed and the true Gospel message sounded out in no uncertain tones by men who found themselves “set for the defence of the Gospel.” The Rev. Thomas Mair of Orwell, who with Ralph Erskine was with the Four Brethren at Gairney Bridge though not yet of them till later, had difficulties about certain statements made in an Act entitled: “Act of the Associate Synod, containing an assertion of some Gospel Truths, in opposition to Arminian errors upon the head of Universal Redemption.” As a lad Mair had helped to transcribe the MS of “a Treatise concerning Justifying or Saving Faith,” written by the revered James Fraser of Brea, and published after his death. (He died in 1699, and the Treatise was published in two volumes in 1722-49.) After long reasoning on an Overture from the Presbytery of Edinburgh and much dealing with Mr. Mair in order to clarify the points on which they seemed to differ, the Synod bade him not teach along the lines that were challenged; and upon his refusal at that Synod (of April, 1754) and his adherence at the Synod of August, 1755, to the tenets called in question, and his refusal of the offer of further time for consideration, he was suspended till the Synod of 1756, and the case was continued for yet another year. In April, 1757, he held to his ground and was deposed, after a process lasting three years. And it was that same Thomas Mair of Orwell who had tabled the Anti-Burgher Declaration at “The Breach” ten years before!²

I have not found anything directly to connect Adam Gib with the case of Mr. Robert Carmichael, minister at Coupar in Angus, who was charged with having “relinquished the Secession testimony,” and adopted “the wildest sectarian and independent principles”; but his opinions found no favour, and at length he was deposed.

Trouble arose also from some mouthings of philosophical jargon uttered by more than one of the Secession students. More serious was it when the Synod found that the teacher of their Philosophical Class, Mr. Alexander Pirie, had been recommending to his students the teaching and flavour of a book entitled *Essays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion*, written by Lord Kames. Adam Gib entered these philosophical lists and wrestled stoutly with his Lordship’s material

¹ *The Doctrine of Grace*: See in *Display*, Vol. I, pp. 171-207 (slightly abridged).

² The particulars of this case are accessible in McKerrow’s *History*, Vol. I, pp. 337-345; Adam Gib’s *Display*, Vol. II, pp. 131-186; with Walker’s *Cunningham Lecture*, 2nd edition, pp. 81 *et seq.* as commentary.

necessitarianism. He sums up thus (*Sacred Contemplations*, p. 494): "The doctrine of necessity in the *Essay* pretended to be of great merit as making a full end of the *Arminian* doctrine about *free will*. And it really does so. But alas! at a vast expence: At no lower expence, in its native tendency—than that of burying Arminianism, with all the valuable things of *Christianity* which have been mentioned, in one common grave; Arminian liberty and Calvinist liberty, going to the pot together." It was this polemical writing on the philosophical side of things that so commended Adam Gib to "Rabbi" Duncan, that explorer in all metaphysical lands. In the *Colloquia Peripatetica* (p. 137 of 4th edition) he is recorded to have said: "Many of our old Scottish divines are deeper men than they get credit for. Some of them belong to the class of the 'forgotten philosophers'; but, because they were first of all divines, their acute philosophy is often overlooked. For example, Gib's *Essay* in answer to the philosophical necessity of Lord Kames is a most ingenious piece of writing."

At times the sky was thick with missiles, aimed at and hurled by Adam Gib, in the form of pamphlets, a list of which so far as I could trace them is appended with titles that sometimes are spicy enough. But of books proper Adam Gib wrote only two:

I—"The Present Truth: A Display of the Secession-Testimony; in the Three Periods of the Rise, State, and Maintenance of that Testimony. In two volumes. 'Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the Saints,' Jude v. 3. 'Established in the PRESENT TRUTH,' II Pet. i, 12. Edinburgh, 1774."

II—"Kaina kai Palaia: Sacred Contemplations in three Parts. I, A View of the Covenant of Works: in its actual state, as common to all mankind, and in its positive state, as peculiar to our First Parents: discovering the singular goodness of God, in that positive State. II, A View of the Covenant of Grace: in the Establishment of it from Eternity, the Accomplishment of it in Time, and the Effect of it through Eternity. III, A View of the absolute and immediate Dependence of all things on God: in a Discourse concerning Liberty and Necessity. By Adam Gib, minister of the Gospel, Edinburgh. Edinburgh M DCC LXXXVI."

Of these two books the former is historical and polemical. The latter is an outline of his teaching from the pulpit and is a legacy to his people. It is short, but it covers the whole round of Christian thought as handled at that time. It escapes being a rattling skeleton of bones or one hoss-shay by reason of the urge in it and the glow from it. The third section of the book contains the crossing of swords with Lord Kames just referred to; the other two parts take up the Covenant of Works and the Covenant

of Grace respectively. He claims that while faithful to the Secession Testimony, "I have very seldom entertained my hearers from the pulpit with any peculiarities of that cause. It has been always my principal, and almost only business there—to explain and enforce those doctrines and duties which are accounted of among Christians of all denominations ; so far as they take the substance of their Christianity from the Bible " . . . "The present appearance is on behalf of the common interests of Christianity " . . . (Preface). Of course error had to be combatted if truth were to be established ; but surely it is self-evident that a huge congregation like that of the Anti-Burghers in the Cross-Causey of Edinburgh could never have been maintained in full vigour all these years on polemic fare. There was an articulated, forceful, glowing message, and it all centred on the Gospel of God's Grace in Jesus Christ, His Divine Son.

Principal Fairbairn, of Mansfield College, Oxford, "a strayed son of the Secession," as he described himself, could hardly speak too strongly and heartily of Adam Gib, and the Anti-Burghers around him, among whom were his own forebears in the Leader valley ; and he asserts, notwithstanding the silence of Mrs. Oliphant in her *History of the House of Blackwood*, that William Blackwood, the founder of "Maga," and who was "the man clothed in plain apparel" of "The Chaldee Manuscript," was born and brought up in Adam Gib's congregation, although the present head of the Edinburgh House of Blackwood tells that he has no family tradition on the point. At the Jubilee of the United Presbyterian Church Principal Fairbairn referred to Adam Gib, whom he called "the unjustly neglected Gib," and "one of the most remarkable figures of last century." He said : "He was no doubt fierce in controversy, violent in action, and not at all formed to please the men who can only discover the excellence which is clothed in silken manners ; but for all that, he had more than the making of a hero in him—he had something heroic. The passion of his devotion to God, with whom he signed a Covenant in his own blood, had in it an element of the sublime. He knew how to write theology ; no man in that whole century showed higher intellectual qualities in the field of thought. He knew how to act generously, as when he refused to profit by the will which his father had made in his favour. . . . And he had the courage of a soldier as well. The Highland host had no terrors for him, and he could drill a regiment to defend freedom, as well as preach so as to save men."¹

¹ *Memorial of Jubilee Synod of the United Presbyterian Church*, May, 1897, pp. 48 and 208. Fairbairn's grandfather was a Burgher and his grandmother an Anti-burgher ("as good as an elder"), and both at Lauder, with no "promiscuous hearing."

As for his vehemence, his violence, his going all lengths in argument, I admit it all and more ; but as one reads the confessions that these men made to God and to one another in course of the " Privy Censures " of the Synod,¹ one sees " the new man " rising above " the old man," at least for the time. And Principal Fairbairn further gives a wonderful picture of the harmonising of fidelity to truth with mutual affection in an article on " The Secession Church " in *The British Weekly* of 31st May, 1900. He says : " I love the old name of ' The Secession Church. It does not speak to me as dissent, or schism, or the spirit which creates difference ; only of singleness of soul, and the fidelity to conscience, which makes the humble great. I once could make merry with the best of the moderns over the rigorous scrupulosity of the Burgher and Anti-Burgher conscience, which knew right well how to differ and not at all how to agree. But now it seems to me as if that scrupulosity expressed a rare veracity of mind, a pathetic severity of conviction, which enhanced rather than lessened the tenderness of life. My grandmother I remember right well, my grandfather I never saw ; but it is pleasant to recall how their sons and daughters loved them, and how they delighted to tell that while the one was a Burgher and the other an Anti-Burgher, so sturdily inflexible that neither had ever been seen in the other's church, yet that they lived a life so beautiful, and so complete in its mutual affection, that the shadow of difference was never known to fall across their hearth. And it would have been hard to tell what impressed these sons and daughters the most, their invincible affection or their incorruptible integrity, the tenderness of heart or the veracity of mind that refused to be led, even by love, from what was held to be truth, though it compelled them only to love the more as the truth was obeyed."

X

Adam Gib died on 11th June, 1788, at the age of 74. Of him as of other brethren, the Anti-Burgher Synod Minutes make no mention save that he had died since last meeting. He was buried in Greyfriars Kirkyard, but the great head-stone gives only the bare particulars with some emblems. Perhaps there was an earlier stone, for Mr. C. B. Boog Watson tells me that in Brown's *Monumental Inscriptions in Greyfriars Churchyard*, pp. 112-3, is an epitaph which is sober and exact—" Sacred to the memory of the Rev. Adam Gib, an able and faithful minister of Christ endued with a large share of natural talent, improved by education, study, and use : in language concise, clear, nervous, and expressive : with freedom, acuteness, zeal, and assiduity, he long preached the pure

¹ *Minutes of Anti-burgher Synod.* April 5th, 1749.

doctrines of the Gospel, and contended to instruct, warn, and reprove, a degenerate and declining age." He has escaped from the hands of biographers, stirring and romantic as his life-story was; but a man that gripped the mind and the imagination of "Rabbi" Duncan, of Principal A. M. Fairbairn, and above all of Dr. James Walker, that master-mind in Scots Theology, had something in him that laid hold of men and swept them into the obedience and service of his Divine Lord. Dr. Walker refers more than once to Adam Gib, almost as if he had discovered him, and his *Cunningham Lectures* are, or should be, at the elbow of everyone who loves Scottish religion, so he is not quoted at length: but take this: "Adam Gib! He is one of the little known men of the past century by whom, I confess, I have been strongly impressed. Perhaps I over-estimate him; but to me there is something very remarkable about him. He is altogether a unique figure in that eighteenth century. He ruled his Anti-Burghers with a firm, strong hand; and I do not know but that an Anti-Burgher Synod was as difficult to rule as many a great empire: they tried rebellion once, but it utterly failed. *Ultimus ecclesiasticorum*! I have sometimes been disposed to exclaim over him. And yet, full of the past, this singular man sowed many of the seeds of the ecclesiastical developments of our own day."¹

Principal Denney said of Dr. T. R. Glover's presentment of Tertullian that he almost made one love the man. I confess that I have conceived a strong liking for the Tertullian of the Secession, Adam Gib the Anti-Burgher—"warts and all."

TOWARDS A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ADAM GIB

1741 A Protestation and Declaration against the Calling, Ordination, and Settlement of Mr. Adam Gib. (Title already quoted in full on p. 146.)

1742 (A similar pamphlet in New College Library by an old Drumclog man, viz.):—"A warning to all the lovers of Christ in Scotland to be upon their guard against the spreading contagion broken out from Mr. Adam Gib, called a minister at Edinburgh. Also, you are to guard against that Deistical Pamphlet, called 'A letter from a gentleman in New England to a friend in Glasgow. . . . Done by an old Drumclog soldier, who was another "Warm Address."' Edinburgh, 1742."

¹ Cunningham Lectures on *The Theology and Theologians of Scotland*, 2nd edition, pp. 34-5, 116-7.

- 1742 A Warning against countenancing the Ministrations of Mr. George Whitefield, etc. (Title already quoted in full on p. 148.)
- 1747 Acts and Proceedings of the Associate Synod at Edinburgh, 1747. Containing the Constitution and Rights of the Associate Synod according to previous contendings for the same :
 Act further asserting the Constitution and Rights of the Associate Synod :
 Act condemning the Resolution made in Synod, April 8 :
 Act condemning the Resolution made in Synod, April 9 :
 Act concerning the ministers and elders presently in a way of separating from the Associate Synod :
 Answers to Reasons of Dissent from, and Protest against their sentence at April 1, 1746, condemning a religious clause of some Burgess-Oaths, which Reasons are inserted :
 With an Introduction and Appendix and some other additions. MDCCXLVII. (By Rev. Adam Gib.)
- 1748 The Proceedings of the Associate Synod at Edinburgh concerning some ministers who have separated from them. Edinburgh, 1748.
- 1748 Remarks upon a Paper just now published intituled Act of the Associate Synod, met at Stirling, April 15, 1748, anent a Fast—to be observed on Thursday next, June 2, whereby the Defection and Deceit, in that pretended Act, are laid open. (By Adam Gib ; signed on last page, Edinburgh, June 1, 1748.)
- 1748 Ralph Erskine : A Review of Mr. Gib's Remarks against the late Synodical Fasts, etc. 1748.
- 1754 A Short Conference betwixt Mr. Adam Gib, Minister of the Gospel in the Associate Congregation at Edinburgh and a Countryman in the parish of Biggar. Wherein is reasoned Whether those that give sad evidence of a graceless state, or those that give charitable evidences of a gracious state, are the proper subjects of the Greater Excommunication. (By John Rob, tailor.) Edinburgh, 1754.
- 1755 "A Rod of Correction for the Ignorance and Dishonesty of a Pamphlet, intituled—A short Conference betwixt Mr. Adam Gib, Minister of the Gospel in the Associate Congregation at Edinburgh, and a countryman in the parish of Biggar, etc., by Adam Gib. Proverbs xxvi, 5—Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit. Edinburgh." 1755.
- 1755 The Rod reported in The Corrector corrected. Some remarks on above by John Rob, Tailor, Biggar. Edinburgh. 1755.

- 1755 "Adam Gib, minister at Edinburgh, in the name of Act of the Associate (Anti-Burgher) Synod at Edinburgh, April 18, 1754." 1755.
- 1755 John Owen, D.D. : *Salus Electorum, Sanguis Jesu*, etc. (with a preface by Adam Gib). 1755. 8vo.
- 1757? *The Player's Scourge : or a detection of the ranting prophanity . . . of stage plays, etc.* (Signed H. L., i.e. Adam Gib ?), (1757 ?). 8vo.
- 1758 A solemn Warning by the Associate Synod in Scotland addressed to persons of all ranks in Great Britain and Ireland. 1758.
- 1763 An Address to the Associate Synod met at Edinburgh, October 11, 1759, By Adam Gib : concerning a Petition and Reasons laid before them by the Rev. Mr. Alexander Moncrieff, that they might consider upon petitioning the King for redress of grievances about the present state of religion in these lands. To which are prefixed Mr. Moncrieff's Petition and Reasons. Edinburgh, MDCCLXIII.
- 1764 An Exposition of a false and abusive Libel entitled "The Procedure of the Associate Synod in Mr. Pirie's case represented and his Protest against their Sentence vindicated" : to which is added an Essay on Excommunication, in which the doctrine of Liberty and Necessity, according to the principles of Calvinists and of Christian philosophy, is briefly stated. And some view is taken of Essays on Liberty and Necessity. Edinburgh, MDCCLXIV. (By the Rev. Adam Gib.)
- 1764 A Candid Examination of Mr. Gib's pamphlet intituled An Exposition of a false and abusive Libel, by Alexander Pirie, Edinburgh, printed for W. Gray, front of the Exchange. 1764.
- 1765 W——, A—— : *The Enchantments of Jannes and Jambres discovered, or the errors and blasphemies of the Secession in their principles on magistracy, exposed, as they are contained in . . . a late Vindication, etc., against the Dissenters*, 1764, by Messrs. Gib and Goodlet, etc. 1765. 12mo.
- 1766 "Up and war them a', Willie" : A Letter of congratulation to the Burgher-hero, William Smith ; upon the glory of his late achievement in routing the whole body of Anti-Burghers. (By Adam Gib.) Edinburgh : MDCCLXVI.

- 1767 Reasons of Protest by three Elders in the Associate Congregation of Edinburgh against an Act of the Associate Synod at Edinburgh, April 9, 1767, exalting the Rev. Mr. Adam Gib to a supremacy over the said Synod and Judicatories subordinate thereto ; and debarring the said three Elders and a multitude of other Persons, members of the said Congregation, from communion with the Church, unless they approve of that Act. Edinburgh, 1767.
- 1767 " A letter to Messrs. T(homa)s K(innea)r, A(ndre)w B(eatso)n, and R(ober)t M(orto)n, occasioned by reading their pamphlet entitled, Reasons of Protest against the Associate Synod, for exalting the Rev. Mr. Adam Gib to a supremacy, &c., &c., &c. Edinburgh, 1767."
- 1767 Letter to Kinnear, &c., &c., regarding Reasons of Protest, Edinburgh, 1767.
- 1768 A Refuge of Lies swept away : In an answer to a most false and abusive Libel lately published by Thomas Kinnear, Insurance Broker, Andrew Beatson, Cloth-merchant, and Robert Morton, Shoemaker — late Elders in the Associate Congregation at Edinburgh : Intituled (as above—" Reasons of Protest "), pp. 195. By Adam Gib. Edinburgh, 1768.
- 1768 Remarks on a Letter pretended to be dated at St. Andrews, October 26, 1767, and addressed to Messrs. K(innea)r, B(eatso)n, and M(orto)n, Shewing the Error, Inconsistency, and gross Absurdity of the Letter-writer, and detecting the sinful, ridiculous, and tyrannical conduct of Mr. Gib and his Synod. By a well-wisher to Mr. Gib, Edinburgh, MDCCLXVIII.
- 1768 Plain Truth, or Some Reasons against a late decision of the Associate Synod whereby a considerable number of Seceders in and about Edinburgh, who cannot in conscience acquiesce in said Deed, are most unwarrantably cast out of communion with the Church in sealing Ordinances. By and with the Advice of those who are aggrieved ? (Drawn up by J—— Reid, Printer ?). Edinburgh, MDCCLXVIII.
- 1768 Plain Dealing in a Letter addressed to the Author and Printer of pretended Plain Truth. (Signed " reality," i.e. Adam Gib.) Edinburgh, MDCCLXVIII.
- 1768 The Indictment, Trial, and Sentence of Messrs. T(homa)s K(innea)r, A(ndre)w B(eatso)n, R(ober)t M(orto)n, before the Associate Synod at the instance of Mr. Adam Gib, by a Gentleman of the

Law (Rev. A. Moir, Burgher, Selkirk). Edinburgh, MDCCLXVIII. 8vo. (A satire upon Adam Gib.) E.g., Art. 1—His haughtiness of countenance ; 2—Sneering ; 3—Cockatrice looks ; 4—refusal to admit fore-going charges in an overbearing manner ; etc. p. 106.

- 1769 An Appeal to the Public : in four parts, containing Some general Observations : a Preface, wherein the Nature and Seasons of Public Covenanting are explained upon Scripture Principles, in order to satisfy the scrupulous about the expediency of renewing our Solemn Covenants at present : A Defence of Solemn Covenanting, in opposition to that Preface by the Rev. Mr. Adam Gib : and a Display of the Spirit, Principles, and Fallacy of the said Defence, By Archibald Hall, the author of that Preface. 1769.
- 1770 The Peculiar Scheme of the Anti-Burgher Seceders unmasked in a series of Letters to Mr. Adam Gib, minister of the Gospel at Edinburgh, Containing Animadversions upon his Defence of certain Petitions and modes of expression used by the Anti-Burgher Seceding ministers in public prayers, published in the Scots Magazine for April, 1769, Wherein their infrequent communicating—their mode of Covenanting—their meaning of the covenanted Reformation—their principles on the head of the Civil Magistrate's power in Church affairs, etc., are briefly considered, and set in a proper light, To which are annexed, Remarks on a Sermon of Mr. Gib's relative to the manner of swearing the Seceders' Covenant, By Andrew Scott, minister of the Gospel at Dundee. Edinburgh, MDCCLXX.
- 1770 Tables for the Four Evangelists. (Anon, 1770.) 2nd edition, with author's name, 1800.
- 1774 The Present Truth : A Display of the Secession Testimony in the three Periods of the Rise, State, and Maintenance of the Testimony, 2 vols., 1774. Title already quoted in full on p. 160.
- 1777 An Antidote against a New Heresy concerning the true Sonship of Jesus Christ : A Sermon from John ix, 35, preached at Howgate on Monday the 30th June, 1777 : being a Thanksgiving Day after a celebration of our Lord's Supper, with some Enlargements and Explanatory Notes, As also an Appendix concerning the wonderful Theory of Animalcular Generation ; as lately brought in by a Clergyman of the Church of Scotland, for the proper ground of the fundamental article of the Christian Religion. By Adam Gib, minister of the Gospel at Edinburgh. Edinburgh : MDCCLXXVII.

(The Rev. William Dalgleish, minister of Peebles Parish Church, on "The True Sonship of Christ investigated," London, 1776.) This was attacked also by Rev. Michael Arthur, minister of the Secession congregation, Peebles, in "The Scripture Doctrine of the Eternal Generation of Christ as the Son of God vindicated," etc. In reply Dalgleish published "The Self-existence and Supreme Deity of Christ defended," as God, and his Generation and Sonship as Immanuel, God-Man, as revealed in the Sacred Scriptures, and explained in a Treatise on the Sonship, Person, and Offices of Christ, defended against . . . A. Gib . . . by the author of that Treatise (W. Dalgleish), Edinburgh, 1777. 12mo. Gib issued a 2nd edition, corrected, Edinburgh, 1777, 8vo.

- 1777 The Sonship of Christ vindicated against Adam Gib. Edinburgh, 1777.
- 1778 *Vindiciae Dominicae*: A Defence of the Reformation Standards of the Church of Scotland concerning the Administration of the Lord's Supper: and the One Sonship of Jesus Christ: in which some Doctrines of the said Standards, upon these important subjects, are explained and vindicated. Edinburgh, 1778. By Adam Gib. Also pub. in 1780.
- 1778 "The Art of squeezing; or, the publications of Messrs. Dalgleish and Scott, plowman, defended, against Messrs. Gib, Brown, and Arthur. (Edinburgh), 1778.
- 1780 The Re-Exhibition of the Testimony vindicated in an opposition to the unfair Account given of it by the Rev. Mr. Adam Gib, by John Brown, minister of the Gospel at Haddington. Glasgow, MDCCLXXX. 8vo. (See also Appendix to some editions of Adam Gib's Display.)
- 1780 An Exposition of some late Reveries concerning the Sonship of Christ. Published in 1780.
- 1780 An Account of the Burgher Re-Exhibition of the Secession Testimony. Published in 1780.
- 1780 A Display of the fraudulent and gross abuses committed upon the Secession Testimony, in a late Publication, intitled the Re-Exhibition of the Testimony: containing some Strictures upon Persecution and Toleration. (By Rev. Adam Gib.) Edinburgh: MDCCLXXX.

- 1782 Adam Gib, Minister of the Gospel. Edinburgh. "A short account of the conduct of some of the Secession Judicators, concerning some petitions presented to them for redress of grievances, referring to some late publications, by Mr. Adam Gib and Mr. Josiah Hunter. 8vo. Glasgow, 1782."
- 1782 A New Vocabulary of Modern Billingsgate Phrases, for the use of Clergymen and others . . . all of them . . . practised in the . . . drubbing given to . . . the late . . . Reverend A(rchibal)d H(al)l, in an examination of his Survey of the religious clauses of some Burgess Oaths. By the Rev. Mr. A(da)m G(i)b. Perth: 1782. 8vo.
- 1783 Christ has other sheep whom He must bring: A Sermon upon John x, 16, in the New Church, Cross-Causey, Edinburgh; immediately before the ordination of Mr. Thomas Beveridge to the office of the Holy Ministry upon a mission to North America, by Adam Gib, minister of the Gospel at Edinburgh. 8vo. Edinburgh: MDCCLXXXIII.
- 1784 A Memorial and Remonstrance read before the Associate Synod at Edinburgh, May 2, 1782, Relative to a printed Sermon which had been preached before them, concerning, I—The Rise of Anti-Christ, with his Progress for 42 months or 1260 days; Against the false calculations thereof made in that Sermon, from Bishop Newton, Mr. Lowman, and Dr. Guyse: II—The Reformation from Popery, as injured by these false calculations: III—The State of the Reformation Testimony, in the hands of the Associate Synod, as likewise injured by that Sermon. With some Remarks upon an Answer to the last part of the Memorial and Remonstrance, that Answer being prefixed. By Adam Gib, minister of the Gospel, Edinburgh. Edinburgh: MDCCLXXXIV.
- 1786 Kaina kai Palaia: Sacred Contemplations, in Three Parts. (Title already quoted in full at p. 160.)
- 1786 M(ichael) Arthur: A compendious account of the controversy . . . between the Rev. Adam Gib and Michael Arthur, etc., 1786. 8vo.

